

RALLY IN RESPONSE TO THE “MISS D” CASE

It is now over 15 years since the X case ruling and successive Irish governments have failed to introduce abortion legislation that clears the muddied waters surrounding Irish women’s right to travel for an abortion. By failing to legislate for cases similar to that of “C” and “X” the Irish government are inflicting unnecessary trauma on women who are already in incredibly stressful situations.

Today, yet another harrowing case of a woman seeking to overturn an order preventing her from travelling for an abortion has come before the courts. Miss “D”, a 17 year old in the care of the HSE is four months pregnant with a child who has been diagnosed with anencephaly. The prognosis for individuals with anencephaly is extremely poor. If the infant is not still-born then he or she will usually die within a few hours or days after birth (Thompson *et al.*, 1994). No woman should have to endure the trauma of carrying to full term a child who will not live more than a few hours. By preventing “Miss D” from travelling the Irish government are defining women by their status as a uterine incubator rather than individuals entitled to basic human rights. “Miss D” is another case of several that have gone before and will come again that highlight the flaws in Irish abortion law. Without legislation to deal with this issue yet more Irish women in difficult situations will have to be dragged through the courts.

Not all of the women who make the difficult decision to have an abortion come to the attention of the courts and the media. Every year over 6,000 women travel to England and further a field to seek a termination. Choice Ireland are today calling for no more “X” or “D” cases, for the repeal of the 8th amendment and for free safe and legal abortion to be made available in Ireland.

EVENTS

Thursday May 3rd, 2007, 10:30am: Demonstration outside the Four Courts in support of “Miss “D”

Saturday May 5th, 2007, 12:00pm: Rally at the GPO with speakers including Representatives from Choice Ireland and Alliance for Choice

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WHO ARE CHOICE IRELAND?

Choice Ireland are a recently founded pro-choice group based in Dublin. The group was formed following a public meeting on pro-choice issues which took place in the Central Hotel in January. Choice Ireland is not affiliated to any political organisation.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- We are a feminist organisation
- We see reproductive freedom as a critical element of women’s liberation
- We recognise that reproductive freedom is multi-faceted and we seek to ensure a woman’s freedom to pursue ALL reproductive choices.
- We promote education to empower women to take charge of their fertility
- The Right to Bodily Integrity
- No affiliation to parties seeking political power
- Solidarity with like-minded pro-choice groups and feminist organisations

WHAT DO WE WANT?

- Free access to accurate information on all crisis pregnancy options
- Legislation regulating information provided by Crisis-Pregnancy Centres
- Immediate legislation for the “X” and “C” cases
- Free access to multiple forms of contraception including the morning-after pill
- Free and Legal Abortion on Demand
- Practical support for women seeking abortion
- High-quality post-abortion care
- An end to the stigma surrounding abortion
- An end to the stigma surrounding sexual health and contraceptive needs
- Increased support for single and low-income parents
- Increased protection for working mothers
- Free access to quality childcare
- An end to the stigma surrounding single parenthood
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- Creation of more feminist health centre